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"PEACE MARCHES" - A NEW WPC TACTIC

August 1959

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The attached letter from the Vienna headquarters of the International Institute for Peace (IIP) -- the name used in Vienna for the World Peace Council (WPC) since that organization was officially ousted from Vienna in 1957 -- contains a detailed outline for national peace committees to follow in organizing the "peace marches" that are now in vogue in the World Peace Movement. These "peace marches" have gained a great deal of publicity for the WPC anti-nuclear weapons campaign and for the policies of the Soviet Union for which the WPC is an outlet. Because many bona fide pacifist groups and individuals who heretofore had resisted collaboration with the WPC have been drawn into these marches, the tactic also furnishes an implication of support for Soviet policies by many non-Communists, thus fulfilling the basic purpose for which the WPC was created.

Some of the more spectacular marches have been the "Aldermaston March" in Britain at Easter time 1959, the "March for Life Against Atomic Death" in the same country in June 1959, and the "Hiroshima Pilgrimages". Other marches, such as the "March on Washington" and the march of a group of Americans across Puerto Rico in protest against US military bases there, have also been extensively publicized in the WPC Bulletin and other Communist press organs. The attached letter obviously is intended to stimulate the organization of other such marches throughout the world.

The four-day Easter March in Britain began on Good Friday at the nuclear research station at Aldermaston. Buses carried some 1000 Londoners to the site where the march began, including John Bernal, Chairman of the WPC Presidential Committee and Vice President of the Communist

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front World Federation of Scientific Workers, D.N. Pritt, President of the Communist front International Association of Democratic Lawyers, President of the British Peace Committee, and member of the WPC, Vincent Duncan-Jones, member of the WPC Secretariat in Vienna, Jim Gardner, Secretary of the British Peace Committee, and two of its former Secretaries, Roy Gore and William Wainwright, all of whom are militantly active in Communist projects.

4,300 people started out from Aldermaston carrying banners, posters, even babies, singing and playing musical instruments on the 53-mile walk to Trafalgar Square in London. Vans were provided for sleeping bags and luggage, towns taken over for dormitories at night. The marchers swelled to 15,000 enroute and another 15,000 people greeted them upon their arrival at the Square. Special groups of theater people, architects, musicians, teachers, the Women's Caravan for Peace, students, labor, foreigners and churches took part; there were particularly large groups of Quakers.

The WPC claimed that 30,000 people representing organizations with a membership of a million and a half took part in the June "March for Life Against Atomic Death". The organization of these marches was shared by the British Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament and other anti-nuclear committees but it will be found that WPC activists form a vocal part of these committees.

The "Peace Pilgrimages to Hiroshima" are expected to involve at least 15,000 people. Various marches started from the remotest islands of Japan well ahead of time and will converge on Hiroshima at the time of the 5th World Conference Against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs, traditionally held on the anniversary of the bomb drop on Hiroshima in August 1945.

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It is needless to enlarge on the purpose of these "peace marches" because the Soviet campaign to discourage defense of the Free World and Free World use of a most effective weapon against the expansion of Soviet imperialism is already well known. However, every possible means should be taken to make the public aware of the true motivation of the marches. People who join the marches believing that they are conducive to bringing about peace should be made acquainted with the background of the organizers, the history of the WPC as an instrument of Soviet policy, and the Soviet definition of "peace" as a condition that can prevail only after capitalism has been banished from the earth.

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Vienna, 12 June 1959

Dear Friends,

The world campaign for a successful Summit Conference is going ahead in the different countries in forms adapted to the national conditions.

We have already informed you of the initiative taken by our British friends; it is part of the world campaign and will help to make the Stockholm Appeal and its objectives known and accepted.

Our British friends are particularly anxious to give an international character to the campaign and to ensure international participation in the March. It is for this reason that they have asked us to transmit to you the enclosed information note and to urge national movements to support the March.

Already a number of Peace Movements in other countries have sent messages of support to the British Movement for their March. This campaign is of great importance not only for the struggle in Britain but also for the World Peace Movement.

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Our friends hope very much that many people from other countries having the opportunity or possibility to be in Great Britain at that time, may be able to be in London on 27 June when the March arrives, and give it their support.

Our friends in London remind us that if any visitors from abroad would like to be welcomed in private families during the weekend of 28 June they should write now to Mrs. M. Smith, 20 Cambridge Square, London W.1.

We believe that the participation of peace supporters from other countries would greatly help the British Movement and also help the development of the campaign in their own countries when they return. We are sure you will do all you can to contribute to the success of this important action, and remain,

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,
For the Executive Board

s/Cheng Shen-yu
Cheng Shen-yu

s/F. Vigne
Fernand Vigne

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COURIER FOR PEACE

-Proposed organisation-

National Peace Committees have recently been informed about the various forms being taken by the campaign launched by the Stockholm session of the World Council of Peace.

To judge from the examples of Great Britain and Japan, it appears that "Peace Marches" are a particularly good way of mobilising people on a very big scale. The idea of "Peace Couriers" has also interested a number of Committees. Below we give a plan of how these "Peace Couriers" can be organised on the national and international level. It is not intended as a rigid basis but is merely a model to be adapted in each case to the possibilities, experience and needs of each country or region.

ORGANISATION: The campaign should take the form of a number of successive stages, passing from the municipal level to the Departmental, from the Departmental to the national level, from the national level to the continental level, and from there to the international level.

First stage: In each municipality peace workers, with the help of peasants', workers', women's and student organisations, will hold conferences, conversations, gatherings and small meetings for a period of ten days, during which they will explain the following three points to the people:

a) The harmful consequences of nuclear weapon tests and what a war conducted with such weapons would mean;

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b) Consequences of the cold war in the social, political, economic and moral spheres;

c) The possibility that the Summit Conference might initiate nuclear disarmament and the elimination of the cold war if all the peoples in the world, every man and woman, make their presence felt at the Conference.

In conclusion, the significance of the "Courier for Peace" will be explained to the people and mass collections held to cover the expenses of the campaign.

In this first stage statements will be obtained from organisations and personalities of all categories, taking care to indicate the importance of the former and the titles of the latter.

It is very important in this stage to obtain the support of local political and religious leaders, school teachers, etc.

The culmination of this stage will be a mass meeting before the municipal authorities to ask for their support. The meeting will endorse a resolution to the Summit Conference and elect the "municipal courier" who will have to go to the Departmental capital with the resolution adopted together with all the documents, declarations of support, articles in the local press obtained in the municipality.

In this stage it would be particularly interesting to get special documents from municipalities or towns that suffered most in the first and second world wars: Liège, Verdun, Stalingrad, Coventry, Oradour, Hiroshima, Okinawa, Warsaw, Lidice, Cologne, Hamburg,...

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Second stage: Similar work will have been done in the Departmental capitals, so that on the date fixed for the meeting of "municipal couriers" the people will already have been mobilised in the campaign.

All the "municipal couriers" will go in a deputation to the Departmental Assembly and Government to ask them to take a stand. This deputation should be supported by a big mass meeting which will elect from the group of "municipal couriers" the "Departmental courier" who will take the results obtained in the Department to the State capital.

Third stage: In the State capital too the preliminary work will have been done in accordance with the indications given for the municipalities. On a fixed date the meeting of "Departmental couriers" will be held in the capital and a great mass demonstration will be organised to accompany them when they go to present to the Parliament and Government the results obtained in the nation and ask them for official support. From the group of "Departmental couriers" the "national courier" will then be elected to take all the national documents to the city designated for the meeting of "national couriers".

A complementary activity that could be carried out during these first three stages would be marches from municipality to municipality, from municipality to Departmental capital, and from municipality to State capital.

During each of these stages peace workers should emphasise the campaign's character of civic emulation. Each municipality should compete with the others, each Department with the other Departments, and the nation should compete with the other nations in the continental zone.

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Fourth stage: To facilitate the organisation of the campaign and ensure its success, it seems suitable to indicate the following continental zones:

AFRICA: Continental Africa and North Africa
AMERICA: North, Caribbean, Pacific and Atlantic
ASIA: Middle East, Continental Asia, Far East
OCEANIA:
EUROPE: Great Britain and the Scandinavian countries,
continental Europe

If this distribution is accepted, the number of the "couriers" who would go to the Summit Conference on the last stage would be twelve.

The following are the proposed venues for the meetings of "national couriers" according to whether the Conference is held in America or Europe.

<u>ZONES</u>	<u>SAN FRANCISCO OR QUEBEC</u>	<u>VIENNA OR GENEVA</u>
Caribbean	Mexico D. F.	Havana
Pacific	Quito	Rio de Janeiro
Atlantic	Quito	Rio de Janeiro
North	Washington	New York
North Africa	Accra	Baghdad
Continental Africa	Accra	Baghdad
Scandinavia & G. B.	London	Copenhagen
Continental Europe	Paris	Paris
Middle East	Beirut	Baghdad
Oceania	Tokyo	Baghdad
Continental Asia	Tokyo	Baghdad
Far East	Tokyo	Baghdad

These meetings of "national couriers" should be the occasion for intensive propaganda on the objective of the

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campaign through press conferences, statements, public talks, radio and television interviews, etc.

These meetings will elect the "international couriers" to go to the Conference.

Fifth stage: The final stage will be the meeting of the "international couriers" in the city in which the Summit Conference takes place to present the results of the campaign to the Conference.

The "Couriers for Peace" campaign can be carried out with certain variations which are to be recommended for regions like Europe where distances are less and the population denser than in Africa or Latin America.

One of these variants would consist in establishing a route to be covered by the peace courier in each country, collecting the support of the towns and people covered by the route towards which, at fixed points, deputations from the different parts of the country could converge. Thus, for example, a French "courier" starting in the South-West would reach the German border after collecting all the documents submitted to him en route. At the German border he would meet the German "courier" who would take over the material for transmission to the Swiss "courier" on that country's border. And so on.

Such a form of organisation, which has some attractive features, offers greater technical difficulties and demands minute preparation and mathematical precision in the routes and dates. In any case, we refer to it because it is possible that in some countries it may appear preferable.

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